



Lincoln Commission On  
**HUMAN RIGHTS**

# 2004 Annual Report

The Lincoln Commission on Human Rights  
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February 1, 2005

Dear Friends:

As Mayor, I am pleased to endorse the 2004 Lincoln Commission on Human Rights Annual Report. This has been another exceptional year for the Commission.

The City of Lincoln continues to experience tremendous growth in our neighborhoods, our business opportunities and in the diversity of people who have made Lincoln their home. To insure that the quality of life we enjoy is guaranteed in the future it is important that we pay close attention to how we interact and treat each other as people.

The attached annual report documents the vital work of our Commission on Human Rights in 2004. The rights of all citizens must be protected and the Commission on Human Rights plays a pivotal role in addressing those guarantees. I have spent my life supporting equal opportunity and fairness for all and I will continue to do so as your Mayor. My thanks to the Lincoln Commission on Human Rights, the Commissioners and staff for another successful year.

Coleen J. Seng  
Mayor of Lincoln





***A MESSAGE FROM  
LCHR'S DIRECTOR***

***LARRY WILLIAMS***

February 1, 2005

Dear Friends:

As Director of the Lincoln Commission on Human Rights (LCHR), I am proud to present the 2004 Annual Report. I am very pleased with the work we have done during the past year.

I am particularly pleased with our outreach and educational efforts. During the past year, we have sponsored more than 60 events reaching more than 2,000 people. For the current year of 2005, we have expanded the annual Fair Housing Conference a day and a half at the request of participants from past years. This event has become one of the highlights of the year for the City and the region. It is particularly pleasing that the 2005 Fair Housing Conference will be sponsored by a number of organizations and agencies from both within and outside of the Lincoln community. It is our hope that we will see many of you at the conference.

In addition to our educational outreach program, LCHR has investigated and closed more than 90 complaints of discrimination in housing, employment and public accommodation. Through 2004, there was more than \$40,000 in monetary settlements for Complainants. All of this has been accomplished with limited financial and personnel resources.

It is through outreach, education as well as effective and efficient enforcement, that LCHR can work toward the elimination of discrimination in our City. My gratitude and thanks to Mayor Coleen J. Seng, the City Council, and the Commissioners for their support. Most of all, a very big thank you to the very dedicated staff of LCHR for their support and hard work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Larry Williams". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid.

Larry Williams  
Director/EOO

# 2004 COMMISSIONERS



**Ernesto Castillo, Chair**  
**Oscar Harriott, Vice-Chair**  
**Maisun Allahiq**  
**Carmy Anthony**  
**David Fikar**  
**Sitaram Jaswal (not pictured)**  
**Lori Lopez Urdiales**  
**Linda Willard**

The LCHR Commissions is a 9-member board of diverse members who hear and decide the cases presented to them. They are all volunteers who are appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council. An additional goal of the Commission is to continue educating the public on the discrimination laws in the hopes of preventing and eventually eliminating unlawful discrimination. They meet on the last Thursday of each month at 4 p.m. in the City Council Chambers of the County/City Building. There will be two open positions at the end of 2005.

## ***STATISTICAL OVERVIEW OF COMPLAINTS***

The 1995 Annual Report was the Commission's first Annual Report since 1990. The 2004 report continues to follow 1995's "overview of complaints" format and content presentation. The result is a 10-year cumulative view as well as a view of last year.

### **OBSERVATIONS, 2004**

There was a total of 90 complaints filed compared to 94 in 2003. There was a total of 90 complaints closed. Overall, there were 100 cases decided of which 63 were decisions of either "reasonable cause" (9) or "no reasonable cause" (54). The remainder were administrative closures, such as withdrawals, lack of jurisdiction, etc. Also, in 2004, the Commission was able to obtain a total of \$41,456.42 in monetary settlements. The Commission settled other cases on a non-monetary basis. Typically, these cases required equal opportunity and discrimination prevention training as well as changes in employment, housing, and business practices.

Some interesting facts are that there were 55 cases filed by females compared to 35 filed by males. The breakdown of cases filed by race/national origin is: Caucasian = 33; African-American = 24; Hispanic = 5; Native American = 3; Iraqi = 5; Mexican = 10; Asian = 4; Biracial = 2; Bolivian = 1; Salvadorian = 2; Guatemalan = 2; and Vietnamese = 1.

### **CUMULATIVE OBSERVATIONS, 1994-2004**

From 1994 to 2004, there was an average of 93 complaints filed per year of which the average for housing was 10 per year, the average for employment was 75 per year and for public accommodation the average was 8 per year.

### CASES FILED IN 2004

	EMPLOYMENT	HOUSING	PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION	TOTAL
<b>Race</b>	26	8	3	37
<b>Color</b>	1	0	1	2
<b>Sex</b>	27	3	2	32
<b>Age</b>	9	NA	NA	9
<b>Religion</b>	3	1	1	5
<b>Disability</b>	9	2	1	12
<b>National Origin</b>	16	5	3	24
<b>Retaliation</b>	14	0	0	14
<b>Marital Status</b>	1	0	1	2
<b>Familial Status</b>	NA	2	NA	2
<b>Ancestry</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u>106</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>139*</u>
<b>ACTUAL TOTAL</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>90</b>
* A total of 139 bases is shown because some complaints were filed on more than one basis. **The actual total indicates how many individual cases were filed.				

### CASES FILED 1994—2004

	HOUSING	EMPLOYMENT	PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION	TOTAL
<b>YEAR</b>	<b># FILED</b>	<b># FILED</b>	<b># FILED</b>	<b>TOTAL # FILED</b>
1994	1	29	3	33
1995	7	36	5	48
1996	23	70	9	102
1997	11	47	9	67
1998	11	65	5	81
1999	4	58	8	70
2000	4	143	9	156
2001	4	78	9	91
2002	13	80	9	102
2003	9	75	10	94
2004	13	69	8	90
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>934</b>

## CASES CLOSED IN 2004

	EMPLOY- MENT	HOUSING	PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION	TOTAL
No Reasonable Cause	40	8	6	54
Pre-Determination Settlements	15	5	0	20
Reasonable Cause	7	0	2	9*
<b>1) Public Hearing Decisions</b>				
a) No Reasonable Cause	0	0	0	0
b) Reasonable Cause	0	0	0	0
<b>2) Conciliations</b>				
a) Successful	7*	0	1	8*
b) Failed	0	0	1	1*
c) Withdrew -NRTS	1	0	0	1*
<b>Administrative Closures</b>				
1) Withdrawals	2	0	0	2
2) Withdrawal with Settlement	0	0	0	0
3) Lack of Cooperation	0	0	0	0
4) Lack of Jurisdiction	3	0	1	4
5) Failure to Locate	0	0	0	0
6) Waived to HUD	0	1	0	1
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100</b>

\* Reasonable Cause findings will result in more than one decision; therefore, the total number of decisions made (100) is greater than the total number of cases closed (90).

## EDUCATION & OUTREACH SERVICES FOR 2004

In 2004, the Lincoln Commission on Human Rights continued with educational sessions to the public on employment, housing, and public accommodations. There were 63 sessions, including the 2004 Fair Housing Conference, 2004 Symposium on Employment Issues, and a joint effort with the Lincoln Public Schools, that reached more than 2,000 people.

We also continued to survey our clients, both Complainants and Respondents, in order to always strive to improve our services to the community and so that people who come to LCHR can have input into how they perceive LCHR. Approximately 91 customer satisfaction surveys were sent in 2004 with an average return rate of about 50% for Respondents and 25% for Complainants.

**2004 ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE LCHR TEAM**  
**Larry Williams, Colleen Floth, Angela Wortman,**  
**Sandi Moody and Jennifer Yang Graham.**

- A co-sponsor of the annual Martin Luther King Freedom Breakfast with LPS, UN-L, and the Inter-faith Council, as well as the annual State of Nebraska Celebration.
- Represented on the Lincoln Board of Realtors Diversity/Equal Opportunity Subcommittee.
- Coordinated the third Fair Housing Conference in April with over 300 attendees.
- Coordinated the 2004 Symposium on Employment Issues with around 90 attendees.
- Permanent participant on the Mayor's Multicultural Affairs Committee (MAC).
- Renewed grants with the United States Equal Opportunity Commission and the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.
- Active participant and member in Citizens Against Racism and Discrimination.
- Participant in the Diversity Partnership Association sponsored by the Nebraska Health and Human Service System.
- Sponsored booths at the Aging Festival, Juneteenth Celebration, World Day on the Mall, and Hispanic Festival.
- Active member in the Community/Ethnic Center monthly discussion group.
- Member and participant in the Nebraska Minority Public Health Association.
- Member and participant in the CSI Housing Coalition and Basic/Emergency Needs coalition.
- Co-chairperson of the Lincoln Public Schools Multicultural Affairs Committee.
- Participated in the Comprehensive Juvenile Justice Plan—Strategic Team #3.
- Presented civil rights information to various public and private agencies at more than 60 events, including weekly presentations on housing issues with the Lincoln Housing Authority Section 8 clients. Through 2004, more than 2,000 individuals received information.
- Attended conferences sponsored by EEOC, HUD, and NFHA, including the new Fair Housing Training Academy.
- Partnership with Urban Development to identify impediments to fair and affordable housing for their consolidated plan.
- Partnership with the Fair Housing Center of Nebraska in training fair housing testers, conducting fair housing informational sessions, etc.
- Member of the Affordable Housing Steering Committee facilitated by the City of Lincoln Urban Development Department, which assists in the formulation of the Consolidated Plan.
- Active participant and member of the New Americans Task Force.
- Active member of the Antelope Valley Connection Team.
- Represented at the Minority Justice Task Force implementation meetings.
- Active member of the Lincoln-Lancaster County Homeless Coalition.
- Co-coordinator and office participation in the annual County/City Food Bank Drive.
- Wrote and awarded a Region V Systems grant of \$1,000 to provide for interpreters for a new project of conducting intake/outreach sessions at the Hispanic Center, Asian Center, and Sudanese Outreach Services Center.
- Active participant in the Lincoln NAACP branch, including participating on the annual Freedom Fund Banquet planning committee.
- Collaborated with the Lincoln-Lancaster Women's Commission to present programs on sexual and racial harassment at all the Lincoln Public School high schools.



## **CONTRACT COMPLIANCE**

The City of Lincoln requires that any contract of more than \$10,000 with any contractor, vendor or supplier of goods and services to the City of Lincoln comply with the provisions of the City of Lincoln's Affirmative Action Policy, (1.16 Contract Compliance). In addition, Section 11.08.160, of the Lincoln Municipal Code requires that every contract contain a provision not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, disability, national origin, ancestry, age or marital status. These requirements also apply to any subcontractor.

All awards of more than \$10,000 are entered into and authorized with the City of Lincoln Charter Article VII, Section 2. These awards are subject to "competitive bidding" and are contracted to the "lowest responsible bidder." If the interests of the City are best served by accepting other than the lowest bid, the Purchasing Agent, with the approval of the Mayor, may reject such bids.

In addition to price, the Purchasing Agent considers, among several other factors, the following in determining the "lowest responsible bidder":

- 1) The character, integrity, reputation, judgment, experience, and efficiency of the bidder;
- 2) The previous and existing compliance by the bidder with the laws and ordinances relating to the contractor service.

Compliance with the Equal Employment Opportunity requirements is vested with the City of Lincoln's Equal Opportunity Officer (EOO).

## **STATUS REPORT**

The Equal Opportunity and the Affirmative Action Officers are in the process of developing new processes and procedures which will insure that all aspects of the mandated rules are being fulfilled and our Affirmative Action Plan is followed.

Recent reports compiled by the Lincoln Commission on Human Rights indicate that the number of contracts entered into by women and minority businesses with the City is declining and our internal processes to fulfill the requirements of the Municipal Code and the Affirmative Action Plan are in need of revision.

Our goal in 2005 will be to streamline this process, insure women and minority enterprises have an opportunity to be contractors, vendors or provider of goods for the City, and revise and issue a new directory of women and minority businesses.



